


**The FIVE AGGREGATES are impermanent and suffering, therefore cannot be regarded as self.**

## What are the five aggregates?

 **Form** **Feeling** **Perception** **Mental Formation** **Consciousness**


The *Buddha* taught us that “you” are not an integral, autonomous entity. The self (conventional truth) is a combination of the five aggregates (ultimate truth), namely the **Body** (*form*) and **Mind** (*feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness*).

## Why do we need to understand the five aggregates?

 **They are the objects that identity view and clinging spring. They are the objects for investigation to gain insight.**

1. The five aggregates of clinging is what the *Buddha* summarized as the Noble Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Ariya Sacca*). Only when we understand *dukkha* correctly can we be liberated from suffering.
2. *Dukkha* comes from the syllable “*du*” which means “bad” and “*kham*” means “void of happiness and self”. *Dukkha* comes about when we cling to the five aggregates as I, mine, myself, my pleasant feeling, my unpleasant feeling, I see, I hear ...
3. The five aggregates are the objects that identity view and clinging spring. They are the objects for investigation to gain insight.

## Why do we attach to the five aggregates?

 **Because we are unable to see the faults and dangers of clinging to them.**

We are attached to the five aggregates as I, mine, myself because we are unable to see the faults and dangers of clinging to them. The five aggregates are the objects of identity view and craving. They are the objects of *insight* (*vipassanā*) for one to gain release from *dukkha*. The goal of our *vipassanā* practice is – **to experience the constant arising and passing away of the five aggregates and to see clearly the dangers of attaching to them** – like a child sees the dangers of getting burnt touching the fireworks in fascination.

Venerable Ananda attained Stream Entry (Sotāpanna) when Arahant Punna Mantaniputta exhorted him, “*It’s with clinging, friend Ananda, that there is ‘I am,’ not without clinging. Clinging to what?*”  
***Clinging to form, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness. They are to be seen as they actually are with right discernment as “This is not what I am.”*** – SN 22.83

**We practice to see that all these five aggregates are impermanent, not permanent. What is impermanent is suffering and what is suffering cannot be regarded as self. What exists is just causes and effects relationship. Only when we are able to see their rising and passing away together with their causality can we become disenchanted and finally let go of attachment to them.**

**These five aggregates, not clung to, lead to long term happiness and well-being.**

